

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 XMB-02
AID-05 IGA-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7887

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, ECON, CE

SUBJ: KEY MINISTRY APPOINTMENTS

REF: (A) STATE 184842; (B) COLOMBO 2585; (C) COLOMBO 2570;
(D) COLOMBO 2544

1. AFTER FLURRY OF MINISTER AND DEPUTY MINISTER APPOINTMENTS
(REFTELS B, C, AND D), GSL HAS BEEN MOVING RATHER SLOWLY ON
LOWER LEVEL APPOINTMENTS IN IMPORTANT ECONOMIC MINISTRIES AND
OFFICES.

2. THE PRIME MINISTER HAS RETAINED THE PLANNING AND PLAN
IMPLEMENTATION PROTOFOIOS BUT THERE HAVE BEEN NO CHANGES AS
YET AT THE SECRETARY LEVEL OR BELOW. THE EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS
THAT PLANNING AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS SECRETARY GUNASEKERA HAS
BEEN ALLOWED TO STAY ON UNTIL HE CAN FIND ANOTHER JOB.
REPORTEDLY, GODFREY GUNATILLEKE OF THE MARGA INSTITUTE WAS
OFFERED THE SECRETARYS POSITION AND TURNED IT DOWN. ONE
RUMORED REPLACEMENT FOR GUNASEKERA IS H.N.S. KARUNATILAKE,
FORMER DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH AT THE CENTRAL BANK.
LEELANANDA DE SILVA TOLD EMBOFF HE WOULD REMAIN AS SENIOR
ADDITIONAL SECRETARY AT PLANNING AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS. THERE
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HAVE BEEN NO CHANGES IN THE EXTENAL RESOURCES DIVISION.

3. LAL JAYAWARDENA CONTINUES AS SECRETARY OF FINANCE AND
SAID HE WOULD BE ACCOMPANYING MINISTER DEMEL TO IBRD/IMF
MEETING IN WASHINGTON AT END OF SEPTEMBER.

4. T. SIVAGNANAM IS STAYING ON AS SECRETARY OF IRRIGATION,

POWER, AND HIGHWAYS WHICHMAKES USAID VERY HAPPY. DR. WICKREMA WEERASOORIA HAS BEEN APPOINTED AS ADDITIONAL SECRETARY IN THIS MINISTRY. HE HOLDS A DOCTORATE FROM THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND WAS FORMERLY A LECTURER AT AN AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY BUT IS UNKNOWN TO EMBASSY OFFICERS.

5. KEERTHI WEERAKKODY HAS MOVED UP FROM ADDITIONAL TO FULL SECRETARY AT THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE. ALTHOUGH HE DOES NOT GIVE THE IMPRESSION OF A BALL OF FIRE, WEERAKKODY IS A COMPETENT ADMINISTRATOR AND, FROM THE US POINT OF VIEW, SHOULD BE EASIER TO WORK WITH THAN WAS HIS PREDECESSOR.

6. LAKSHMAN DE MEL HAS MOVED FROM SECRETARY OF LABOR TO SECRETARY IN THE MINISTRY OF TRADE.

7. THE NEW SECRETARY OF PLANTATION INDUSTRIES, BRADMAN WEERAKOON, IS GENERALLY CONSIDERED AN EXCELLENT CHOICE FOR THE JOB. HE GAVE UP A FINE REGIONAL JOB IN KARACHI WITH THE IPPF TO COME BACK TO SRI LANKA AND ACCEPT HIS POSITION.

8. OTHER SECRETARIAL APPOINTMENTS:

SHIPPING, AVIATION, AND TOURISM - WALTER RUPASINGHE (FORMER GENERAL MANAGER OF CEYLON HOTELS CORP.)

JUSTICE - PARINDA RANASINGHE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT, HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION - EARDLEY G.

GOONEWARDENE (FORMER SECRETARY OF FISHERIES)

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PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND HOME AFFAIRS - D.B.I.P.S.

SIRIWARDENE

INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING - SARATH AMUNUGAMA (FORMER DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION)

TRANSPORT AND CEYLON TRANSPORT BOARD - MAHINDA ELAYAPERUMA

EDUCATION - D.M.P.B. DASSANAYAKE (FORMER CONTROLLER OF

IMMIGRATION AND EMIGRATION)

THERE HAVE BEEN NO CHANGES AT THE FOOD COMMISSIONER'S DEPARTMENT OR THE CENTRAL BANK.

9. APPOINTMENTS OF STATE CORPORATION CHAIRMANSIPS WILL BE COMING THICK AND FAST NOW THAT THE PM HAS ORDERED ALL FORMER CHAIRMEN TO RESIGN. A COMPLETE LIST WILL BE PROVIDED BY AIRGRAM. IN THE MEANTIME, HERE ARE SOME OF THE MORE IMPORTANT ONES ALREADY MADE:

AIR CEYLON - G.S. (GLENNIE) PEIRIS

FLOUR MILLING - CAPT. HEYWARD FERNANDO

CEYLON PETROLEUM - DAHAM WIMALASENA (FORMER SECRETARY OF UNP)

GRAPHITE - HITUHAMU DISSANAYAKE

SHIPPING - REAR ADMIRAL RAJAN KADIRGAMAR (FORMER NAVY COMMANDER)

STATE TRADING (GENERAL) - ROHAN HAPUGALA

STATE TRADING (TRACTOR) - MAHIMAN DE SILVA
JANASWASAMA ESTATES - PEMSIN R. SENEVIRATNE (PLANTER FROM
GEORGE STEUART AND CO.)
PHARMACEUTICALS - DR. GLADYS JAYEWARDENE (FORMER DEPUTY
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH SERVICES)
PLANTATIONS - KENNETH RATWATTE (FORMER CHAIRMAN, CEYLON
COMMERICAL COMPANY, TAKEN OVER BY GOVT IN 1976)
TEA BOARD - BERTY WARUSAWITHANA
TOURIST BOARD - CHANDRA N. DE SOYZA

10. COMMENT: THE MINISTRY APPOINTMENTS MADE SO FAR ARE
GENERALLY GOOD ONES AND IT IS ENCOURAGING THAT ANUMBER OF
GOOD PEOPLE, (E.G. LAL JAYAWARDENA, LEELANANDA DE SILVA,
AND T. SIVAGNANAM) WILL BE KEPT IN PLACE. THE CORPORATION
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CHAIRMEN APPOINTED ARE OF VARYING QUALITY BUT THER SEEM TO
BE MORE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR THAN PRE-
VIOUSLY.
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